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ABSTRACT

Reflecting contemporary research and widely held beliefs about how children grow, develop, and learn, this publication describes standards for child development programs for preschool and school-age children. The text is divided into three main sections which discuss background material, program components, and the program quality review process. The first section makes a philosophical statement about child development programs and offers a theoretical framework for children's learning. In the second section, each program component--environment, curriculum and assessment, site personnel, partnerships between parents and site personnel, and administration--is introduced with a brief statement, which is followed by a description of the characteristics of an exemplary program for that component. A reference list and a sample of a completed form reporting findings of an agency self-study are provided for each component. The third section discusses the agency self-study process and the program quality review process. This section emphasizes the importance of self-study and illustrates the steps needed to follow the self-study and quality review processes. An appendix includes an agency self-study worksheet, a form for summarizing findings of an agency self-study, a program self-study report form, a quality review worksheet, a form for reporting the results of a quality review, and a form for describing an agency action plan. (MM)

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Exemplary Program Standards

for Child Development Programs Serving Preschool and School-Age Children

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Exemplary Program Standards

for Child Development Programs
Serving Preschool and School-Age Children

Prepared by
Child Development Division

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Preface

High-quality early childhood education is crucial to the success of our educational reform efforts. Of the six national education goals issued by President Bush and the nation's governors, the one focusing on the importance of the early years of a child's life placed first. By the year 2000, that goal envisions, every school-age American child will arrive at school ready to learn. This publication, *Exemplary Program Standards for Child Development Programs Serving Preschool and School-Age Children*, supports that goal by providing a valuable instrument designed to improve the quality of child development programs.

The standards, which focus on meeting children's needs, are based on generally accepted theories about child development. They adhere to the recommendations of the 1988 School Readiness Task Force report titled *Here They Come: Ready or Not!*, which called for an appropriate, experiential educational program for young children. According to that report, the program should encourage children's success and promote continuity with early primary education. In addition, before-school and after-school programs for elementary students should be promoted to develop strong linkages with regular classroom activities. In 1989 the California Education Summit continued the impetus to reform by emphasizing the importance of educational quality and challenging educators to develop realistic standards of quality as well as measures of outcomes.

Historically, the importance of program quality standards in child development programs has long been recognized in California. In the mid-1970s the California Department of Education developed guidelines for recommended program quality standards. With the enactment of Senate Bill 863 in 1980, the Department continued the process of defining what a high-quality program for preschool-age children should look like. After more than two years of work with field representatives, a program quality review instrument identifying indicators of quality was produced in 1983. Over the next several years this instrument and

others were used to promote and measure quality as well as program compliance. More recently, however, the Department of Education has expanded its focus to improving the quality of services to children while maintaining an ongoing commitment to monitoring program compliance. Toward that end these exemplary program standards are to be used as a guide for improving the quality of programs; they are not to be used to determine compliance. They replace the current program quality review instruments for center-based preschool-age programs, school-age programs, and family child care programs.

Exemplary Program Standards for Child Development Programs Serving Preschool and School-Age Children will help ensure high-quality child development programs for children before entry into formal schooling and before and after the school day. The standards set forth in this publication, when used appropriately, will support the goals of meeting children's developmental needs and enhancing their potential benefit from future learning opportunities. Quality child development programs can profoundly influence the lives of the children they serve. We hope you find this document useful in preparing our children to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

ROBERT W. AGEE
Deputy Superintendent
for Field Services

ROBERT A. CERVANTES
Director
Child Development Division

KATHRYN WITCHER
Administrator
Child Development Division

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Acknowledgments

The development of quality standards for child development programs has been an ongoing process in the California Department of Education's Child Development Division since the mid-1970s. The initial writer for this publication was Barbara Sandman, a specialist in early childhood education who has the wonderful ability to listen to a variety of viewpoints, ideas, and concepts and then present them in coherent written form. Her experience in the Department's Office of School Improvement was also helpful. Other writers were Virginia Benson, Chau (Helen) Nguyen, Barbara Tardif, and Eva Vasquez, consultants in the Child Development Division.

The following persons active in child development made up the Program Quality Review Task Force, which met regularly to provide viewpoints, ideas, and concepts used in the development of this publication:

Virginia Benson, Child Development Division, California Department of Education

Sheila Hart, Shasta County Office of Education, Redding

Charlotte Keuscher, Office of School Improvement, California Department of Education

Candace Lee, Rainbow State Preschool, San Francisco

Evangeline Lewis, Inglewood Unified School District

Antonia Lopez, The Foundation Center for Phenomenological Research, Inc., Sacramento

Candace McKay, San Diego City Unified School District

Chau (Helen) Nguyen, Child Development Division, California Department of Education

Patricia Monighan Nourot, Visiting Educator, Sonoma State University

Rosie Rios, Continuing Development, Inc., Campbell

Andrea Vergara, Los Angeles Unified School District

Kathryn Witcher, Administrator, Child Development Division, California Department of Education

Field testing of the exemplary program standards was done in the following locations:

Chico Community Children's Center: Preschool-age children

City of Gardena: Family child care homes

City of Sacramento: School-age children

Community Child Care Programs, Inc., North Highlands: Family child care homes

Compton Unified School District: Preschool-age and school-age children

Orange Children and Parents Together, Inc.: Preschool-age children

Placer County Office of Education, Loomis: Family child care homes

River Child Care, Inc., Guerneville: Family child care homes

San Juan Unified School District, Carmichael: Preschool-age and school-age children

YMCA of San Diego County–Palomar, Escondido: School-age children

Field testing was conducted by teams composed of a task force member and a Child Development Division consultant assigned to the task force. These child development agencies provided information regarding the viability and usefulness of this publication. The concerns expressed were addressed in subsequent drafts.

The task force acknowledges the support and interest of Robert Agee, Deputy Superintendent, Field Services Branch, and his assistant, Ada Hand, who continually provided ideas. Child Development Division administrators providing assistance were Robert A. Cervantes, Assistant Superintendent; Janet Poole, Assistant Director; and Kathryn Witcher, Administrator, Program Development and Improvement, who served as the manager of the project and provided guidance and leadership.

Introduction

Exemplary Program Standards for Child Development Programs includes the following components:

- Environment
- Children's program
- Site personnel
- Parent/site personnel partnership
- Administration

Both public and private programs funded by the Department of Education that serve preschool and school-age children, including family child care homes, center-based preschool programs, and school-age child care programs, must use these standards. Programs not funded by the Department will, it is hoped, also use these standards to improve the quality of their programs.

The exemplary program standards reflect current research and widely held beliefs about how children grow and develop and learn and what kinds of quality programs should be offered to them. The standards are based on the positions advocated in the following reports:

- *Here They Come: Ready or Not!*

  The Task Force believes that the schools should be changed to fit the needs of their students rather than to continue to try to fit the children into programs which are inappropriate. This does not mean that children will no longer be taught to read or to do math and science in kindergarten and first grade; only that the teaching of reading, math, and science will be age-appropriate and individually appropriate. In age-appropriate experiential and integrated curricula, children learn academic skills in context and develop complex thinking skills, including analyzing and problem solving. Within age-appropriate classrooms, children's learning is integrated. For instance, children extend their knowledge of reading and writing when they work

on science or social studies projects; they learn mathematical concepts through science projects, music, and physical education. This type of curriculum can enhance the progress of the gifted child as well as the average child.[1]

- *Good Teaching Practices for 4- and 5-Year-Olds:*

  Young children learn by doing. The work of Piaget (1950, 1972), Montessori (1964), Erikson (1950), and other child development theorists and researchers (Elkind, 1986; Kamii, 1985) has demonstrated that learning is a complex process that results from the interaction of children's own thinking and their experiences in the external world. Maturation is an important contributor to learning because it provides a framework from which children's learning proceeds. As children get older, they acquire new skills and experiences that facilitate the learning process. For example, as children grow physically, they are more able to manipulate and explore their own environment. Also, as children mature, they are more able to understand the point of view of other people.[2]

Two other documents that measure quality were used for reference and comparison:

- *Quality Criteria for Elementary Schools:*

  This document describes quality criteria based on the California curriculum frameworks for public schools in mathematics, language arts, science, visual and performing arts, history–social science, physical education, English as a second language, and foreign language. The frameworks provide guidance for curriculum development for kindergarten through grade eight. *Quality Criteria for Elementary Schools* requires an in-depth self-study for each program, leading to a program improvement plan. It is produced by the Office of School Improvement, California Department of Education, and is intended for use in a validation review every three years.[3]

[1] *Here They Come: Ready or Not! Full Report.* Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1988, p. 2.
[2] *Good Teaching Practices for 4- and 5-Year-Olds.* Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1986.
[3] *Quality Criteria for Elementary Schools.* Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1990.

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- *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures:*

  This document presents criteria that programs use for self-comparison. The criteria are based on current research and child development theory. Considerable field review and input helps to ensure that the criteria are also based upon generally accepted practices. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) produced the document, which is used nationwide. Agencies may use this document to evaluate their program and may request accreditation by NAEYC on the basis of the content of the document.[4]

The exemplary program standards pull together the ideas and concepts referenced in each of the documents previously cited.

A high-quality child development program provides a safe, nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, creative, linguistic, and cognitive development of each child through developmentally and culturally appropriate practices while responding to the needs of the child and his or her family.

The procedures described in this publication represent a departure from those previously used by the Child Development Division in a quality review of child development programs. The three fundamental changes are the following:

- Program improvement, not compliance, is emphasized. Program compliance will continue to be addressed through licensing procedures and the California Department of Education's consolidated compliance review/contract monitoring review process.
- An external review is made by peers to validate the site-based self-study and share fresh thinking in designing ways to improve or maintain program quality.
- Commitment is made to promote continuity of experiences for children as they move through early childhood programs into early primary and middle grades.

[4] *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs.* Edited by Sue Bredekamp. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1984.

Description of the Standards

Exemplary Program Standards is divided into three main sections—background, program components, and program quality review process:

- **Background**
  - A. Philosophical Statement for Child Development Programs
  - B. Theoretical Framework for Children's Learning
- **Program Components**
  - A. Environment
  - B. Children's Program
  - C. Site Personnel
  - D. Parent/Site Personnel Partnership
  - E. Administration

Each component is introduced with a brief statement followed by a section describing the characteristics of an exemplary program for that component. This section contains a description of what an exemplary program looks like and a list of examples of what to do, which can be used as a guide. At the end of each component can be found a list of selected references followed by a sample agency self-study summary of findings. Component A lists appropriate activities, materials, and equipment according to age group (see Chart 1 on page 15). This chart may be used for components A and B.

- **Program Quality Review Process**
  - A. Agency Self-Study Process
  - B. Program Quality Validation Review Process

This section emphasizes the importance of the self-study, which is the foundation on which the validation review is built. It also illustrates the steps needed to guide one through the self-study and the validation review.

A. Philosophical Statement for Child Development Programs

The exemplary program standards were developed according to the principle that the child development program exists for the child, not the child for the program. Whatever activities occur in a high-quality child development program, they must promote, support, and enhance the child's development by:

- Reflecting developmentally appropriate practices
- Recognizing that each child brings to the program his or her own family values and culture
- Working in partnership with the child's parents to promote the growth and development of the child
- Providing administrative leadership based on an interactionist approach and utilizing all available resources in support of the child and the family

Each child brings values, language, and customs to the child development program. These factors define the child and form the basis for continued growth and development. California's diverse population requires that the child development staff understand the impact that the cultural, linguistic, racial, and religious practices of the child's family have upon the child. The staff must form partnerships with parents to learn more about each child and discover how best to facilitate the child's development. Whether the child, for example, comes with a language other than English or wears a turban or is unaccustomed to milk in the diet, staff acceptance of these unique features lays the groundwork for understanding, contributes to the child's self-esteem, and models positive attitudes and behaviors for all the children in the program. Finally, administrative leadership promotes and supports activities that lead to a high-quality program for children and their families.

B. Theoretical Framework for Children's Learning

The philosphical statement just presented should be kept in mind as this section on the theoretical framework is studied. The framework is based on current research that supports an interactionist approach.

Various learning theories have influenced what occurs in child development programs. The interactionist model is the one most commonly held among child development professionals and educators in the public school reform movement and provides a basis for developmentally appropriate practices. The exemplary program standards focus on the interactionist learning model.

Interactionist theory supports the developmental theory and research of Jean Piaget (1950, 1952). This theory emphasizes that children, through constant interactions with their environment, have the ability to build up on their knowledge base as new experiences occur. Through these experiences children continually develop their own concepts about the world. These interactions are reinforced by contact with peers and adults and through the use of materials that provide appropriate challenges to adapt as each new experience occurs. Children's knowledge is reinforced through questioning, forming ideas, and testing and modifying their data base.

Current learning theory supports active learning in which the child interacts with other children, adults, and materials. It also focuses on the interconnected needs of the whole child.

Piaget differentiates three types of knowledge: social-conventional, physical, and logical-mathematical. Children acquire all three types in child development programs. Social-conventional knowledge (i.e., social learning) is gained through association and requires teaching by others and some rote learning. For example, children learn specific skills, such as spelling correctly, reciting the alphabet, and naming the days of the week in this way. Physical knowledge is learned by discovery through the child's senses. This type of learning has to

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occur through firsthand experience. For example, a child learns the properties of a magnifying glass by using it. Logical-mathematical knowledge, on the other hand, involves creating and inventing relationships between objects and symbols, such as when the child classifies objects, compares sizes, and identifies number concepts.

Basically, all three types of learning are necessary in a child development program. Logical-mathematical learning has been more common at the preschool level and social-conventional (skills and rote) at the elementary school level. As a result of the educational reform movement, all types of learning are now emphasized at the elementary level. In this approach children must create relationships among things and engage in problem solving and creative thinking.

Piaget believed that cognitive development progresses through four stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational. An infant/toddler in the sensorimotor stage learns primarily through the senses, such as tasting, and physical exploration, such as grasping; but a preschooler in the preoperational stage learns by interacting with people and materials.

Young children in the concrete operational stage are able to think logically but only if provided with concrete materials to manipulate. However, older children and young adults in the formal operational stage can engage in logical thinking at an abstract level. Piaget believed that all children progress through these stages in the same order but not necessarily at the same rate and that a child could operate in more than one stage at a time. His work demonstrated that children think in ways qualitatively very different from adults. He believed that learning environment and activities should be related to the child's stage of cognitive development.

This concept of stages of development is relevant to the exemplary program standards because children in family child care homes, center-based preschools, and school-age child development programs could range in age from about three through fourteen. If the range of ages in a program is wide, such as in before-school and after-school programs, there could be children of various ages in different stages of development. The agency staff and observers of these programs need to be cognizant of this fact. This developmental perspective is well accepted, but opinion

differs about a child's particular characteristics at various stages. These stages should be viewed broadly as a way of understanding children's thinking. The standards highlight different levels of learning and activities based on these stages.

Related research includes work by cognitive scientists, among them Howard Gardner (1963) and J.R. Anderson (1989). These scientists are studying how the brain functions in processing information. Gardner determined that all children have multiple intelligences, (i.e., linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal) but special strengths in certain ones. Child development staff need to be aware of which intelligences are used most often by individual children and then provide opportunities for children to learn with all their intelligences while relying on their dominant intelligence for new or different materials.

J.R. Anderson and other cognitive scientists are conducting brain research on memory and information processing. They emphasize the relationship between memory and learning. The most effective information processing in the brain is apparently based on the formation of networks of related information. This understanding that children build networks of information supports an integrated curriculum approach in which ideas and subject matter are tied together in various ways. Such information networking also occurs when children are engaged in their own learning according to a thinking-meaning centered curriculum. These new findings lend credence to the interactionist approach of the exemplary program standards.

All children's needs, including nutritional, health, and economic needs, must be addressed for children to learn at an optimal level. An example of the importance and interconnections of these factors is based on the findings that part of the brain regulates hearing, thinking, eating, and chemical balances and transfers incoming information to memory. If the child's health and nutritional needs are not met, this part of the brain will not function effectively. Clearly, early identification and referral of health and social needs are critical.

In interactionist theory and research, the child's learning is viewed as the sum of all knowledge and experiences based on social, moral, and cognitive development. This framework addresses social-emotional and moral learning as well as cognitive learning

because children's social and moral learning is based on their ability to understand and process concepts. Children develop social skills and roles through social and dramatic play. They develop morally by discussing and solving moral dilemmas and learning social rules and moral values. For children to become competent learners, they must have positive self-concepts.

The curriculum for a child development program should be an outgrowth of the program's espoused learning theory and be consistent with it. Because the exemplary program standards are based on an interactionist model, decisions on curriculum and assessment should reflect what is known about age-appropriate and individually appropriate practices for children. Site personnel using this publication should evaluate their agency's curriculum and assessment procedures to ensure that they are consistent with the exemplary program standards.

In summary, educators responsible for before-school and after-school programs, preschool programs, and public school programs that support educational reform now view learning from an interactionist perspective. This perspective is influencing choices about curriculum content, teaching strategies, and assessment techniques. Professional staff working in child development and public school programs may now be able to communicate with each other about articulated curricula on the basis of a common theoretical framework.

Selected References: Theoretical Framework

Anderson, J. R. *Cognitive Psychology and Its Implications* (Second edition). New York: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1985.

Gardner, Howard. *Frames of Mind: Theory of the Multiple Intelligences*. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1963.

Piaget, Jean. *Origins of Intelligence*. New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1952.

Piaget, Jean. *The Psychology of Intelligence*. London: Routledge and Kegen, 1950.

A. Environment

This section contains a description of an exemplary environment for preschool and school-age children in centers and family child care homes. The site's physical environment, the children's schedule, and the relationships between the children and adults at the site are focused on.

Characteristics of an Exemplary Environment

Physical Environment

The physical environment invites children to discover, create, explore, experiment, observe, discuss, and share. Site personnel organize space and place furniture and equipment to (1) promote the children's freedom to choose materials with which to work; and (2) facilitate the children's interactions with each other and with adults.

Site personnel also consider the children's need for quiet areas as well as areas where more active learning can take place. The arrangement is flexible and adaptable to a variety of activities and grouping patterns and is designed to promote the children's use of the various interest centers and activity areas. The children are busily involved with each other, the materials and equipment available, or the adults working with them. They are not running aimlessly, creating loud noises unnecessarily, using materials destructively, or showing signs of boredom or stress.

The room environment is welcoming, comfortable, and appealing and encourages children's choice and responsibility. It reflects accurately the cultures and languages of the children. Items and areas within the room are clearly labeled. The children's paintings and other art products are displayed so that they can be readily seen and enjoyed by all. The size of the furniture is appropriate and

Program Components

The environment, which includes physical and interpersonal features, supports the children's opportunities for learning.

reflects the stages of development being experienced by the children. The presence of both plants and animals increases the appeal of the environment and enriches the program. The children have ready access, both indoors and outdoors, to a variety of materials and equipment that reflect their ages and levels of development and accommodate the special needs of children with handicapping conditions. Adequate quantities of materials and equipment are available for the children to use.

Some programs may operate in unusual environments, such as churches or multipurpose rooms. Even so, these programs will normally use available space effectively. In family child care homes, the environment will reflect a homelike atmosphere reflecting each home's unique arrangement of space and furniture. The physical environment, including furniture and space, is appropriate for the smaller number of children served.

The outdoor space is an extension of indoor space, providing opportunities for active learning experiences. Young children play on hard surfaces with wheeled toys or build three-dimensional structures; on soft surfaces—sculpting sand or examining the inhabitants of the grass; and in wide-open spaces that invite running, leaping, and playing games. All children have daily opportunities for exploratory movement, perceptual motor experiences, basic fitness activities and exercise, and unstructured free play. Older children are able to play organized games and sports.

Examples of what to do

Physical Environment

Site personnel:

- Arrange the room so that the following activities can take place on various occasions: dramatics or puppetry; art; playing with blocks; construction; games and manipulatives; making music; cooking; playing with sand and water; using computers; doing homework, for school-age children; exploration in science and mathematics; and reading and listening.
- Separate noisy and quiet areas. Quiet, soft places are available so that a child can retreat when he or she needs to do so.

- Separate the activity areas through the use of low furniture that enables adults to keep an unobtrusive eye on children's activities.
- Provide an outdoor space as an extension of the indoor learning space containing equipment for young children, such as balancing and climbing apparatus; swings; wheel toys; large blocks; balls; and containers of sand and water. Natural and grassy areas allow children to enjoy and explore the outdoors. For older children outdoor activities require areas and equipment for more organized games, sports, and hobbies.
- The program works out an arrangement plan with appropriate authority so that space can be shared effectively.
- The following should be provided:
  1. Materials appropriate as to relevancy and the children's level of development and in good condition
  2. A room environment containing visual display such as artifacts, posters, musical instruments, books, dolls, and clothing—all of which are real, current, and nonbiased (see Chart 1 on page 15)

Children's Schedule

Schedules are consistent and are planned with or by the children so that they can anticipate the sequence of events during their day and know generally what to expect. Sufficient time is scheduled for the children to select their activities and to work or play for extended periods of time outdoors and indoors. Transitions between activities and between the child's home and the child development site are smooth. For the school-age program, safe transition between the school and the center is carefully planned.

On arrival the children are greeted by an adult and at the end of the day are sent home with a word to the parent or guardian about their day. Children are encouraged to participate in

a variety of tasks that help develop responsibility. They are not expected to stand in line or sit quietly for extended periods of time. In school-age programs children are pulled out of the program for special help as little as possible. Resource site personnel provide special assistance in the room to the fullest extent possible. Children have opportunities to plan and review their activities. Staff members incorporate children's interests into the daily schedule as well as into the long-term plans when appropriate.

Examples of what to do

Children's Schedule

- Site personnel schedule clearly defined periods for specific activities and routines, ensuring that:
  1. Scheduled time periods are appropriate for the activities planned.
  2. Time is allotted for transition from one activity to another.
  3. Time is allotted for children to select their activities and complete their project.
- Adults plan a safe route and supervise the transition of school-age children between different programs or homes or both.
- The daily schedule includes opportunities and adequate time for small-group and large-group activities indoors and outdoors.
- Site personnel and providers discuss the daily schedule with resource persons before children are arbitrarily pulled out for special services.

Interpersonal Environment

The atmosphere at the site is generally one of joy, warmth, and caring. The adults have created a safe, nurturing environment in which the dignity, worth, and cultural uniqueness of each child and the child's family are valued. The adults are genuinely interested in what the children are doing, how they are feeling, and what they have to say. Quick to comfort a child who feels distressed, the adults help the child deal with problems constructively and provide an environment that is nurturing and safe for children to

explore and resolve personal conflicts. Children take acceptable physical and personal risks.

Examples of what to do

Interpersonal Environment

Site personnel:

- Recognize and value each child's uniqueness and potential and demonstrate consideration and respect for children's family and friends.
- Respond quickly, positively, and respectfully to children's needs and questions.
- Establish clear rules and expectations of behavior and apply them consistently and fairly so that the children will model these behaviors.
- Encourage children to take only appropriate physical risks in learning new skills, sports, or games.
- Help children resolve their problems, when conflicts arise, through a variety of means, such as discussions and role playing.

Age groups		
3–5	**5–8**	**8–14**
Sand/water play	Reading/listening library	Reading/listening library
Puzzles	Bicycles	Computers/typewriters
Three-wheel toys	Jump ropes	Books about heroes/ heroines and fiction
Blocks	Roller skates	Woodworking
Swing/sliding/climbing structure	More complex puzzles	Gardening tools
Dress-up clothes	Science materials (magnifying glass, scales, thermometer)	Sewing machine
Puppets	Computers/typewriters	Animal raising
Picture storybooks	Favorite stories children can read	Clay
Thick crayons	Watercolors	Science experiments
Easel/chalkboard	Multicultural books	Embroidery/weaving/ sewing machine
Finger paints	Large rubber balls	Camera/records/tapes
Playdough	Play money	Writing plays
Simple rhythm instruments (e.g., bells, drum)	Clay	Children's cookbooks
Stacking toys	Poetry reading	Poetry/story reading and writing
Beads		Team games/sports
Nursery rhymes		

Chart 1
Examples of Age-appropriate Activities, Materials, and Equipment

Selected References: Environment

Harms, T., and R. Clifford. *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1980.

Holmann, M.; B. Banet; and D. Weikart. *Young Children in Action*. Ypsilanti, Mich.: The High/Scope Press, 1979.

Vergeront, J. *Places and Spaces for Preschool and Primary (Indoors)*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1987.

Vergeront, J. *Places and Spaces for Preschool and Primary (Outdoors)*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1987

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
Form CD-3013 (10/91)

Exemplary Program Standards
Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings

(Use a separate sheet for each component.)

Agency name	Program director		
Recreation, Incorporated	J. Gomez		
Site	**Site supervisor**	**Age range**	**Date**
Sandpiper Boys' and Girls' Club	Ann Cooper	11-14	July 5, 1991

FINDINGS

The following is the result of the self-study comparing this site with an exemplary environment component.

Match(es): As described in the "Physical Environment" section, an area is provided for students to receive assistance so that they can complete their homework. There are sufficient tables, chairs, and resource materials placed so that each student can choose to work independently or to collaborate with others.

Gap(s): As described in the "Physical Environment" section, the program is attempting to reflect the cultures of the children enrolled. Large posters depict American Indians sitting around a tepee or riding horses while carrying spears. The posters do not portray the current life-style of American Indians and are stereotypical.

ACTION PLANS

Improvement activities to close the gap	*Who is responsible?*	*Starting date*	*Anticipated results when gap is closed*	*Actual results of improvement activities*	*Self-review date*
1. Seek consultation with resource specialist regarding the selection and use of materials (e.g., books, posters, games, music) that reflect different cultures accurately.	Program director	7-25-91	Personnel will have a better idea of how to select and use materials that are not stereotypical.		
2. Talk to the children or parents or both about materials or information the children might bring from home.	Site supervisor	8-15-91	Personnel can secure accurate information about the customs and life-styles of the families.		
3. Develop a plan for integrating the use of multicultural materials into the curriculum.	Teacher	9-1-91	Children will be exposed to materials and information about different cultures.		

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B. Children's Program

This section contains a description of an exemplary program for preschool and school-age children in centers or family child care homes. To be discussed are the child-centered curriculum, the balanced curriculum, the integrated curriculum, and assessment.

The curriculum for the children must be developmentally appropriate and meaning-centered. It must also involve active learning and take into account information gained from an authentic assessment of each child.

Characteristics of an Exemplary Children's Program

Child-centered Curriculum

On the basis of what we know about how children grow and learn, the curriculum the children experience is child-centered and reflects the program goals and objectives. Materials and activities are appropriate for culture, development, and age; meet the child's individual needs, interests, and desires; and capitalize on the child's strengths. The children are actively exploring the materials around them; building their skills in educational, recreational, and leisure-time activities; engaging in activities appropriate to their skill level; and expanding their natural curiosity. Learning opportunities are provided for children to demonstrate and talk about what they are learning and how they are feeling.

In a child-centered curriculum children's interests are incorporated into the curriculum. When children are engaged in activities that are interesting and meaningful to them, they persist in completing the task and desire to learn more, thus facilitating the development of a disposition for learning. Children participate in activities based on genuine life experiences. Family child care providers offer children genuine home-life experiences familiar to the children. When children are involved in learning, they enjoy an active, industrious, energetic environment.

Children are encouraged to express growing independence and self-reliance, make choices, initiate their own activities, and solve problems. Working

individually or in small groups, they select their own activities from a variety of learning areas or centers and display responsibility in obtaining necessary materials, using them appropriately, and cleaning up or putting them away when completed. Adults plan and provide cooperative learning activities that involve small groups.

Projects selected and directed by adults are kept to a minimum. Because children learn through play and work, adults provide a choice of play and work activities that foster cognitive, physical, social-emotional, linguistic, and creative growth. Children are offered activities related to their stage of development. That is, they may be using the same materials but are working at different levels according to their stage of development.

Materials and activities are culturally and ethnically appropriate and meaningful. Instructional media are accurate, current, and nonbiased. The child's home language is recognized and used as much as possible throughout the day. Adults promote appreciation and respect for diverse cultures.

Examples of what to do

Child-centered Curriculum

Site personnel:

- Provide problem-solving opportunities for children to explore, experiment, question, form ideas, and test and modify these ideas on the basis of new information.
- Plan for long-term and short-term projects with a variety of activities to accommodate the cultural and developmental levels and interests of the children. Some examples of long-term projects could be planting and maintaining a garden or writing and putting on a play.
- Move among children, facilitating their involvement, asking questions, offering suggestions, and, for older children, adding more complex ideas or materials or both to extend the children's understanding.
- Respect each child's increasing interest in personal grooming by providing such things as combs, mirrors, and toothbrushes.

- Encourage children, especially older school-age children, to establish their own rules and apply them fairly.
- Provide a variety of activities involving art, music and dance, science, nutrition, health, dramatic play, library, mathematics, games and manipulatives, and computers.
- Promote the development of children's social skills by providing experiences in civic responsibility and consideration of others.
- Provide opportunities for older children to make choices through project work, discussions, community clubs, and organized games.
- Utilize each child's home language as much as possible in communicating with children and selecting materials, such as books, records, music, and games, that reflect that child's culture and home language.

Balanced Curriculum

The children experience a balanced curriculum in which activities are designed to promote fully the cognitive, physical, social-emotional, linguistic, and creative development of each child. In addition, there is a balance between small-motor and large-motor activities, active and quiet periods, individual and group activities, and child-initiated and adult-initiated activities. Activities are adapted to accommodate the children's different learning modalities, such as linguistic, kinesthetic, visual, auditory, and spatial. Individual and cooperative learning activities as well as skill development and rote learning are provided for within the curriculum. Opportunities exist for spontaneous and structured activities, indoors as well as outdoors, in a curriculum designed for all children, including those with special needs.

Examples of what to do

Balanced Curriculum

Site personnel:

- Plan and provide a variety of adult-directed and child-initiated activities.
- Plan a daily schedule of activities based on a balance of indoor and outdoor activities.

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- Plan and provide activities that allow children to learn through a variety of senses.
- Provide opportunities for group discussion and sharing.

Integrated Curriculum

The children experience an integrated curriculum that focuses on more than one ability or developmental or subject-matter area at the same time or in the same activity. In this curriculum there is an awareness that children's cognitive, physical, social-emotional, linguistic, and creative abilities develop at the same time and are interconnected. As the child works to make sense of the world, informal and spontaneous projects that are child-centered and are based on the child's interests aid in integrating ideas and notions. For the preschool child this process leads to growth in problem-solving skills and the ability to see relationships between various ideas and events. For the older child the teacher provides more formal projects and lessons built around a particular theme leading to an integration of developmental and subject-matter areas and an extension of knowledge.

This integrated curriculum encourages a child to develop in all areas. Activities are provided to promote the development of children's thinking skills throughout all aspects of the curriculum. The children are encouraged to develop more complex concepts and ways of thinking and doing. Opportunities for children to practice self-help and social skills allow them to apply what they have learned. Site personnel promote the development of the disposition to make moral decisions. The integrated curriculum is planned and implemented so that children accept themselves and others and gain a sense of dignity and worth while learning to respect, value, and accept diversity.

Examples of what to do

Integrated Curriculum

Site personnel:

- Plan and provide activities and experiences through projects and

themes that reflect the cultures of the children and relate to the following curriculum areas:

1. Fine arts, including visual arts, music, movement, and dramatics to foster appreciation and creative development
2. Language development activities to foster the development of each child's ability to use and interpret the elements of language through listening to and dictating or writing stories, dramatizations, or anecdotes; role playing; and carrying on meaningful conversations
3. Mathematics activities to explore spatial relationships, numerical relations, and problem solving

- Provide science activities that involve observing, classifying, measuring, and inferring, all of which promote the development of thinking skills.
- Provide history–social science activities to promote children's self-concept and understanding of people's similarities and differences.
- Provide health education and physical education to promote life-long health and recreational skills.
- Provide activities that support the children's interest, creativity, and appreciation of aesthetics through music, dance, painting, drawing, and drama.
- Ask questions to encourage children to reflect on their thinking, pose next-step problems, help children examine their hypotheses, and encourage open-ended problem solving.
- Provide computer software, if available, that includes activities to foster creative thinking.
- Plan and provide activities that promote the application of information learned.
- Include multicultural information in all areas of curriculum instead of reserving such information for special events or special days only.

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Assessment

Site personnel assess each preschool or school-age child, using formal or informal assessment processes to determine the child's needs, interests, and skills on entering the program. Ongoing assessment of each child's development, needs, and interests continues throughout the year because of continuing change and growth. Parents of young children are asked to provide necessary information about the child. For an older school-age child, the assessment may be completed with the child's help and may also include a self-assessment or peer critique of activities.

Site personnel consider the implications of culture and race related to how assessment is done and what is assessed. Site personnel ensure that assessments are free from cultural and linguistic bias and are appropriate to the level of development and the individual needs and interests of each child. Assessments are also used to identify the strengths of each child.

Authentic assessment information collected over a period of time relies heavily on the children's own words and actions, both written and oral. Anecdotal information resulting from observation and parent input is recorded and becomes part of each child's portfolio. Appropriate standardized tests are used by a person specially trained in their use for diagnosis only when a handicapping condition is suspected and are not to be used in the assessment of children's learning. In this process the labeling of the children is to be avoided.

Assessments are conducted primarily to monitor the child's development and to plan activities appropriate to the child's level of development. For instance, site personnel continually assess the growth and development of the children and make sure that (1) materials and activities are appropriate to the age, individual needs, and interests of each child; and (2) the curriculum matches the child's emerging mental abilities. The results then are used to plan for activities appropriate to the child's cognitive, physical, social-emotional, linguistic, and creative levels of development.

Examples of what to do

Assessment

- Site personnel continually assess children's development in all domains by observing them at work and

play, talking with them about what they are learning, keeping anecdotal records of their development and samples of their work, and sharing this information with their parents.

- Site personnel maintain and update regularly a portfolio to document the development of each child. The portfolios include samples of children's work, developmental checklists, photographs of children's activities, and the results of interest surveys.
- If a developmental problem is suspected, site personnel consult with the parents, other site personnel, and specialists before referring a child for special testing. In this process the labeling of the children is to be avoided.
- Site personnel ensure that assessments are an integral part of the curriculum rather than a periodic event for the purpose of issuing a report.
- Adults monitor children's development by providing a wide variety of materials and activities for the children to choose, facilitating the use of materials and space, and observing as the children work and play.

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Exemplary Program Standards

Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings

(Use a separate sheet for each component.)

Agency name		Program director			
The Little People Child Development Program		R. Lu			
Site	Site supervisor		Age range	Date	
Prospect Avenue Child Development Center	B. Garcia		2-6	July 8, 1991	

FINDINGS

The following is the result of the self-study comparing this site to the characteristics of an exemplary children's program component.

Match(es): As described in the "Child-Centered Curriculum" section, the children are fully engaged in their activities, persisting to completion and desiring to learn more. Some children wanted to repeat an activity and were offered opportunities to practice and add different elements to the activity by singing a song and adding new words and by learning to ride a tricycle backwards as well as forwards.

Gap(s): As described in the "Balanced Curriculum" section, it is apparent that the curriculum as designed does not fully promote the cognitive development of each child. Cognitive development activities are limited to rote learning through such means as using alphabet flash cards to teach children the letters of the alphabet.

ACTION PLANS

Improvement activities to close the gap	*Who is responsible?*	*Starting date*	*Anticipated results when gap is closed*	*Actual results of improvement activities*	Self-review date
1. Introduce the concept of cognitive development.	Program director	8-15-91	Site supervisor begins to understand other ways to promote cognitive learning.		
2. Provide training on the use of sets and pairs of identical and similar materials.	Program director Site supervisor Site personnel	8-17-91	Children will be provided a variety of learning opportunities that promote cognitive development.		
3. Talk with children about materials they are using that have clear similarities and differences.	Site personnel	8-25-91	Oral language and social skills are promoted as children discuss similarities and differences.		
4. Take dictation from children as they describe the similarities and differences.	Site personnel	9-17-91	Oral language and written language are promoted along with cognitive development.		
5. Ask the site supervisor to suggest other activities to enhance cognitive development.	Program director	9-25-91	Site personnel will begin to expand understanding of appropriate activities for higher levels of thinking.		

C. Site Personnel

This section contains a description of optimum standards for site personnel in centers or family child care homes. The standards focus on attitudes and skills, professionalism, and professional development.

Characteristics of Exemplary Site Personnel

Trained, knowledgeable, and caring site personnel will facilitate children's learning.

Attitudes and Skills

Site personnel appreciate and value each child in their program. They are nurturing, compassionate people who are active listeners and care about each child. They appreciate, are sensitive to, accept, and value the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the children and hold each child's family in high regard. Being cooperative, respectful of the dignity and opinions of others, and accepting responsibilities for decisions are valued traits best demonstrated through modeling.

Site personnel are knowledgeable about how to conduct an effective program. That is, they understand how children grow and develop and how they learn. They are also knowledgeable about the kinds of instructional strategies most appropriate to each learning task. The organizational and managerial skills of key site personnel are evidenced by the smooth operation of the site program. In addition to daily planning, long-range planning is used to provide an overall framework for selecting and developing objectives and activities. Site personnel are also knowledgeable about the availability of a variety of resources in the community and use them to enrich the curriculum.

Open communication among the adults and children helps to ensure that information about the children is known and shared in a way that will be

beneficial to the children. In extended-day-care settings in which a succession of adults are with the children, ongoing communication among adults becomes routine. Adult teamwork is based on open communication and results in better planning, organization, and work.

Examples of what to do

Attitudes and Skills

Site personnel:

- Demonstrate teamwork by teaching as part of a team and sharing materials and instructional strategies.
- Become involved in the children's work and play throughout the day by talking, playing, and working with the children.
- Demonstrate positive attitudes about the cultural values, expectations, and child-rearing practices of the families; select culturally appropriate activities and materials for the children; and employ teaching strategies consistent with this knowledge.
- Spend time planning activities during the program day.
- Meet regularly to discuss the children and the program.

Professionalism

Site personnel exhibit pride and enthusiasm in their profession. At work they demonstrate professional behavior in the way in which they handle responsibilities and through appropriate attire, tone of voice, and punctuality. They also work in partnership with parents to ensure that the program meets the aspirations of the parents and the needs of the children. They act as advocates in the community for the children and their program. Parents and site personnel serve as program liaisons to others in the community, contributing to and articulating program goals and objectives and describing how parents and site personnel act as partners to accomplish these goals. Site personnel facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration with specialists to maximize each child's potential and ensure continuity of services.

Examples of what to do

Professionalism

Site personnel:

- Survey community resources that may be used to enrich the program: visiting experts, businesses, community groups, and local governmental agencies.
- Seek a variety of opportunities, such as bringing experts to the program and providing current information about local course offerings and conferences and workshops.
- Maintain communication links with professionals in the other fields.
- Seek a variety of opportunities to serve as advocates for the children and the program.

Professional Development

Site personnel are open, flexible, and willing to learn and make changes in order to provide activities that are challenging and responsive to the children's needs. Each person is committed to continuing professional growth through participation in professional development activities, which may include local in-service training, outside visitations, enrollment in college courses, individualized reading on selected topics, and attendance at conferences. Site personnel assist in the planning of these activities to ensure appropriateness to their needs and potential effectiveness. The supervision of site personnel includes observation and feedback and provides the basis for professional development activities. Site personnel also learn from each other in informal settings and work together to refine instructional, observational, planning, and assessment skills. Linkage with local educational agencies and private programs is an ongoing process promoting articulation.

Examples of what to do

Professional Development

- Site personnel seek professional development opportunities. The following topics might be addressed:
  1. Child growth and development

2. Design and implementation of developmentally appropriate curriculum, activities, and materials
3. Appropriate assessment strategies and information on how to interpret and apply assessment results
4. Strategies for actively involving parents in the program
5. Cultural and social values, expectations, and child-rearing practices of the family
6. Language development
7. Uses of technology
8. Positive discipline strategies

- Site personnel seek professional development in a variety of ways, such as visiting other child development sites; linking experienced personnel with less experienced ones; visiting schools and participating in community activities; attending conferences; and making presentations to the governing boards of local school districts.

Selected References: Site Personnel

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Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings

(Use a separate sheet for each component.)

Agency name	Program director		
City of Sunflower	M. McFarland		
Site	**Site supervisor**	**Age range**	**Date**
Community Preschool	W. Jones	3–5	July 6, 1991

FINDINGS

The following is the result of the self-study comparing this site with the characteristics of an exemplary site personnel component.

Match(es): As described in the "Attitudes and Skills" section, all site personnel thoroughly enjoy the children in their program. They also appear to care about each other and coordinate their work schedule so that they can continue college course work if desired.

Gap(s): As described in the "Attitudes and Skills" section, only limited resources from the community are used regularly to enrich the curriculum. The staff was not inviting local community workers into the center as a part of the program activities.

ACTION PLANS

Improvement activities to close the gap	*Who is responsible?*	*Starting date*	*Anticipated results when gap is closed*	*Actual results of improvement activities*	Self-review date
1. Survey the community to see what resources are available.	Site supervisor	7-9-91	The child development center will become aware of what resources are available.		
2. Develop a plan to use the results of the survey.	Teacher	8-9-91	The site personnel will plan to use the resources to enrich the program.		
3. Implement the plan to use the resources, including recognition of the donors.	All site personnel	9-9-91	The curriculum is enriched by the use of resources in the community.		

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D. Parent/Site Personnel Partnership

This section is focused on the partnership between parents and site personnel working in an exemplary program in centers or family child care homes. Major items discussed are building a partnership, establishing parent-site personnel communication, and establishing community liaison.

Parents and site personnel, working together, are likely to produce more effective outcomes for the children.

Characteristics of an Exemplary Parent/Site Personnel Partnership

Building a Partnership

Site personnel and parents acknowledge their joint responsibility for the education of the children and work together to establish partnerships based on mutual trust and respect. Site personnel recognize and value the roles the parents play in the growth and development of their children and share the aspirations parents have for their children as well as their cultural values. They shape the children's program to reflect these aspirations, values, and cultural expectations and thereby provide greater continuity in children's experiences between the home and the child development site.

Parents hold the site personnel in high regard, and site personnel view all parents as important contributors to the program as well as the children's first teachers. In the school-age program, site personnel assist parents in helping their children with academic work at home by providing suggestions related to homework and other matters.

Site personnel provide parent education to help parents understand how children learn. Parents and site personnel regularly discuss, both formally and informally, the child's program and the parents' active involvement in their child's

learning. Site personnel share examples of home activities consistent with developmentally appropriate practices and explain the importance of play in the children's learning. They also suggest activities and strategies to help the parents promote curiosity, creativity, cooperation, friendliness, helpfulness, diligence, and persistence—characteristics that will help children to succeed.

Examples of what to do

Building a Partnership

Site personnel:

- Get to know the parents of each child and their expectations and aspirations for their children as well as their cultural values through parent conferences, meetings, and surveys. They visit the family at home, if possible, and plan the child's program so that it reflects and incorporates parental expectations and values.
- Encourage parents to extend and reinforce learning at home through such activities as:
  1. Reading with the children on a regular basis
  2. Encouraging younger children to count or classify items such as fruit, cookies, and napkins and shop for groceries
  3. Playing games or sports with their children
  4. Letting younger children measure liquids and solids, which can be poured from container to container
  5. Providing materials so that the children can draw, color, cut, paint, and construct
  6. Assisting with homework
  7. Involving children in educationally appropriate computer activities
  8. Enabling school projects to be completed at home
  9. Sharing family history and traditions
- Share with parents the various ways in which they can participate in the

program, such as helping with outings or field trips, preparing materials at home for special activities, sharing aspects of their culture with the children, and contacting other parents about program activities.

- Ask parents to discuss with their children daily activities and events at child development sites in which parents and children participate.

Establishing Parent/Site Personnel Communication

Site personnel value the participation of the parents, welcoming parents to join their children's program at any time. In addition, site personnel use a variety of means to ensure interactive communication. For example, they greet parents as the parents drop off or pick up their children and share something positive about the child's day. They also send home with the children notes about a skill mastered, something just learned, or a project completed. And they sponsor periodic social events to provide better relations with parents.

Parents regularly share with site personnel significant events in their child's experiences at home as well as their assessment of the child's development. In addition, parents have access to information about the kinds of available social and health services, classes on parenting strategies, and discussion groups. Discussion sessions for parents are held regularly during which parents can discuss any topic of interest or concern with site personnel or administrators or both.

In addition to these informal avenues of communication, parent-teacher conferences, advisory committee meetings, periodic newsletters, the site bulletin board, and a handbook stating the philosophy, program goals, and important policies and procedures of the program constitute the formal communication structure. Communication, written as well as oral, is presented in a language parents understand. A major goal of the program is to maintain open and ongoing communication between site personnel and parents.

Examples of what to do

Establishing Parent/Site Personnel Communication

Site personnel:

- Use ongoing, informal parent contact as a means of communication.
- Ensure that parent volunteers know what to do and how to do it. Parent participation activities might include:
  1. Assisting with field trips
  2. Helping with program projects
  3. Sharing expertise or special interests with the children
  4. Helping prepare food
  5. Bringing artifacts from home
  6. Taking dictation from the children
  7. Reading to the children
- Create a welcoming environment with a parent bulletin board or message center near the site entrance with attractively displayed articles and information and resources of interest to parents.
- Hold regular meetings for the parents, at convenient times and places, in which they can discuss topics of interest, hear guest speakers, discuss the curriculum, and learn about available social services. Site personnel share information with parents who are nonreaders or who speak languages other than English.
- Help parents develop support networks among themselves.
- Hold parent conferences regularly that reinforce the concept of partnership to:
  1. Discuss the child's growth and development.
  2. Discuss samples from the child's portfolio and anecdotes about the child's behavior at home and in the program.
- Use occasional social events to strengthen rapport, respect, and friendship between the family and site personnel.

Establishing Community Liaison

Parents and site personnel work together to keep the community informed about their program. Parents help identify community resources for use in the children's program. In cooperation, parents and site personnel encourage community members to share their skills, knowledge, and resources with the children and to help celebrate culturally significant days and events. They also work with local agencies to promote quality services for all children. Together, parents, site personnel, and community representatives are strong advocates for children's issues.

Examples of what to do

Establishing Community Liaison

Site personnel:

- Keep the community informed about the children's program through the regular use of newsletters, posters, announcements, and social events.
- Coordinate activities with community youth organizations, such as scouts, 4-H clubs, athletic leagues, and other recreational or artistic programs.
- Involve local businesses in supporting the program and acting as advocates for the children.

Selected References: Parent/Site Personnel Partnership

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Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings

(Use a separate sheet for each component.)

Agency name	Program director		
Worthington Unified School District	T. Brown		
Site	**Site supervisor**	**Age range**	**Date**
Children's Center	C. Lang	5–8	July 9, 1991

FINDINGS

The following is the result of the self-study comparing this site with an exemplary parent/site personnel partnership component.

Match(es): As described in the "Building a Partnership" section, parents and site personnel regularly share examples of home activities that are consistent with developmentally appropriate practices and the role of play in the learning of children. Packets with games, books, puppets, and tapes have been prepared for children to borrow from the center to take home for a week at a time. There are ten packets prepared, and they are always checked out and circulate between the center and the children's homes.

Gap(s): As described in the "Building a Partnership" section, the site personnel have not discussed with parents their aspirations and expectations for the children.

ACTION PLANS

Improvement activities to close the gap	*Who is responsible?*	*Starting date*	*Anticipated results when gap is closed*	*Actual results of improvement activities*	*Self-review date*
1. Site personnel develop a plan to discuss with parents aspirations and expectations for their children.	Site supervisor	7-16-91	A specific process is developed to secure information from the parents.		
2. Site personnel and parents discuss parents' aspiration and expectations.	Site personnel and parents	8-16-91	Information gained from parents is used in planning activities and supports the parents.		
3. Site personnel develop strategies to include information gained from the parents.	Site personnel	9-1-91	The activities incorporating parental expectations are implemented.		

E. Administration

This section is focused on the administration of an exemplary program in centers or family child care homes. Major items discussed are administrative leadership and support, accountability, administrative advocacy, and planning and evaluation.

Administrators must provide the leadership and support to ensure a high-quality program for children and families.

Characteristics of an Exemplary Program for Administration

Administrative Leadership and Support

Administrators are knowledgeable about how children grow and develop and learn, and they use this knowledge in designing, together with staff members, a developmentally and culturally appropriate children's program. The program's statement of philosophy provides a vision that will be provided and expresses the fundamental beliefs on which the program is based. The goals and objectives of the program are developed jointly by the administrators, site personnel, parents, and the governing board. Site rules, job descriptions and agreements, and guidelines for site personnel/parent relations are clearly defined.

Administrators support site personnel in carrying out the program's stated goals and objectives. A climate of trust encompassing parents, site personnel, administrators, and the board is established. As much as possible, administrators recruit and hire site personnel who are fluent in the languages spoken by the children and are representative of and sensitive to the cultures of the children being served. Ongoing supportive communication is maintained between site personnel and administrators, who frequently visit the program and participate

in or observe the children's activities. The administrators are genuinely interested in the welfare of the children, the parents, and the site personnel.

Administrative leadership supports and encourages site personnel to improve educational practices continually. The administrators develop a professional development plan that includes on-site and off-site training opportunities, reflects the needs and interests of program personnel, and allows for time away from the program for site visitations or other training. They ensure that the professional development activities are concrete, experiential, and ongoing and are tailored to meet the needs of the participants and designed to enhance their sense of professionalism. Administrators evaluate professional development activities to improve the knowledge and skills of individuals who work with children.

The administrators also provide direct support to programs by ensuring that materials and supplies are available at the sites when needed, facilities are well maintained, and equipment is kept in good condition. Whenever site personnel need assistance from a specialist in the diagnosis of a child or need to make a referral to a local health or social services agency and require a translator to help the teachers communicate with a parent, they provide timely and necessary assistance. Administrators are familiar with local resources and know how to secure information and materials needed by site personnel. They also promote articulation between child development programs and the schools and recognize the importance of enhancing children's learning and maintaining continued success.

Examples of what to do

Administrative Leadership and Support

Administrators:

- Seek and utilize knowledge about how children grow and develop and learn and about developmentally and culturally appropriate practices. They review the program to make sure it is consistent with that knowledge.
- Prepare a vision statement of the program's philosophy and periodically review the vision statement of stated goals and objectives to ensure

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that the appropriate implementation is occurring.

- Post the vision statement and distribute it to parents and others, ensuring that it reflects what is happening at the site.
- Develop a long-range program plan that aligns curriculum, instructional practices, and evaluation.
- Work to establish and maintain open, frequent two-way communication among site personnel, administration, and parents.
- Maintain information regarding current needs and conditions of the program so that a timely response can be made when assistance is requested.
- Maintain a list of substitutes who are familiar with the program and are readily available when needed.
- Enable site personnel to incorporate new instructional strategies into their program by providing follow-up resources: modeling, coaching, guided practices, and peer observations.
- Invite site personnel from other public and private agencies that serve children to participate in professional development activities.
- Inform site personnel and parents about opportunities to attend board meetings.

Accountability

Administrators are responsible for implementing the goals and objectives of the program. They ensure that appropriate personnel have the skills and knowledge necessary to assess competency and make accurate judgments of each staff member's abilities during and after the probationary period. The administrative staff has sufficient skills to monitor the program's fiscal, licensing, and eligibility requirements. In addition, the administration maintains close relations with the executive board so that the administration is accountable to the board and the board is accountable for the quality of the program in all areas.

Examples of what to do

Accountability

- Administrators maintain optimum working conditions, salaries, and fringe benefits to reduce turnover of site personnel.
- Board members are knowledgeable about the program and visit it as frequently as they can.

Administrative Advocacy

Administrators are advocates for the children and for a developmentally appropriate program. They reach out into the community to establish two-way communication with other agencies serving children and to promote the development and use of a range of support services for children and their families. In addition, they arrange for personnel from each site to meet with representatives of other programs, including preschools, elementary schools, middle schools, and community-based recreational programs. They also share information about their programs and discuss what kinds of information can be provided when the child moves into another program. As advocates for developmentally appropriate programs, they work harmoniously with the community, supporting the site personnel when any outside pressures arise from those unfamiliar with developmentally appropriate practices. They offer information at public forums on developmentally appropriate practices and other child development issues.

Examples of what to do

Administrative Advocacy

Administrators:

- Establish a plan for communicating with other agencies and schools in the community.
- Speak to and work with community groups to inform them about the program and gain support for it.
- Seek and use a variety of health and social services available in the community.

Planning and Evaluation

An evaluation process exists that includes input from board members, parents, staff, and children, especially when school-age children are served. Program evaluation is timely, meaningful, and continual and is based on jointly developed goals and objectives. The administrators help site personnel refine their assessment procedures so that the information collected directly supports the formation of a developmentally appropriate program for each child.

The administrators organize, manage, and support long-range planning and daily planning and evaluation and provide time for the activity. The areas that may be included in the evaluation are:

- Program goals and objectives
- Impact of the program on the children
- Curriculum and its implementation
- Performance of site personnel
- Analysis of problems and concerns
- Strategies for implementation
- Utilization of and need for resources
- Professional development

Administrators evaluate professional development activities systematically and use the evaluation results to design or redesign these activities. They are knowledgeable about adult and professional development and recognize the value of on-site professional development activities as well as visits to other sites and participation in conferences. Administrators do whatever they can to promote the professionalism of the site personnel, including establishing career ladders and championing the cause of an equitable pay scale.

Broad-based participation and commitment to a well-organized and well-managed program improvement process are evident. Administrators ensure that the design of all evaluation procedures provide the information needed to make effective improvements. These improvements may be in the activities and materials of the children's program, the activities and behaviors of the site personnel, or the functioning and effectiveness of the program as a whole. Resources are allocated in support of the planned improvements.

Examples of what to do

Planning and Evaluation

Administrators:

- Provide planning time for all site personnel.
- Provide strategies for future training and planning for experienced and inexperienced site personnel.
- Review periodically program goals and objectives, job descriptions, site rules, agreements, and guidelines with all persons affected, including parents.
- Plan a budget that reflects the goals and objectives of the program based on input from the site personnel and parents.
- Utilize a variety of fund-raising activities that involve parents and the community when additional funds are needed to support the program. The fund-raising should be consistent with the program's vision statement.
- Provide opportunities for modeling, coaching, guided practice, peer critique, and follow-up support of site personnel for program improvement.

Selected References: Administration

Administering Programs for Young Children. Edited by J. Brown. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1984.

Decker, C., and J. Decker. *Planning and Administering Early Childhood Programs.* Columbus, Ohio: Merrill Publishing Co., 1987.

Greenman, James, and Robert Fuqua. "Making Day Care Better," in *Family Day Care Homes.* Edited by June Sale. New York: Teachers College Press, 1984.

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
Form CD-3013 (10-91)

Exemplary Program Standards

Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings

(Use a separate sheet for each component.)

Agency name	Program director		
Community Links, Inc.	B. Nakamura		
Site	**Site supervisor**	**Age range**	**Date**
Smith Home	S. Smith	2-5	July 9, 1991

FINDINGS

The following is the result of the self-study comparing this site with an exemplary administration component.

Match(es): As described in the "Administrative Leadership and Support" section, administrators actively recruit site personnel who are fluent in the languages spoken by the children and are sensitive to the children's cultures.

Gap(s): As described in the "Administrative Advocacy" section, the administration does not provide a buffer for Ms. Smith, who reports continual pressure from kindergarten teachers requesting that children prepare for kindergarten by practicing activities that are not developmentally appropriate, such as using alphabet flash cards, filling out workbook pages, beginning to sound words, making alphabet correlations, writing their names, and so on. Ms. Smith said that she did not know how to respond to the pressure.

ACTION PLANS

Improvement activities to close the gap	*Who is responsible?*	*Starting date*	*Anticipated results when gap is closed*	*Actual results of improvement activities*	*Self-review date*
1. Prepare a list of appropriate activities that are offered in the home to present to and discuss with the kindergarten teachers and the principal.	Program director	10-10-91	Information is organized to share with kindergarten teachers and principal.		
2. Meet with the kindergarten teacher and principal to discuss the activities offered by the site supervisor and other providers. Describe how they enhance learning and thus lead to readiness for school.	Program director	10-17-91	There will be ongoing meetings between the program and kindergarten staff and the principal about how developmentally appropriate practice prepares children for kindergarten.		
3. Invite the kindergarten teachers to observe at the site supervisor's home.	Program director	11-15-91	Teachers will see how developmentally appropriate activities are implemented.		
4. Continue meeting with the kindergarten teachers for continued discussion of developmentally appropriate practices.	Program director	1-17-92	The kindergarten teachers and principal will become familiar with developmentally appropriate practices.		

Program Quality Review Process

A. Agency Self-Study Process

A site-based self-study is the first critical step in the program quality review process. Site personnel will use the quality standards to assess the degree to which their program matches the standards described in the *Exemplary Program Standards* and to identify the areas of focus for program improvement.

The self-study is a review activity that includes an in-depth look at the quality of the program at each site and is the most important feature of the process. It is conducted yearly by a group called a self-study group that is selected by each agency. The self-study (1) establishes a mechanism for monitoring the quality of the program; and (2) is the foundation on which a formal validation review is built.

When a review is conducted, the self-study group must use the exemplary program standards as the foundation of the study. These standards are used as criteria according to which the program's performance is compared.

The steps for conducting the self-study are as follows:

1. *Select persons to do the self-study.* Each agency selects its own self-study group, which may include site personnel, administrators, board members, parents, or community members. The group consists of at least two persons and must include persons familiar with the program. Some programs may form larger study groups according to the size of their program. A prescribed time should be set as to when to conduct the review. All persons involved must be assigned specific roles while conducting the self-study and must be trained in the use of the exemplary program standards.
2. *Prepare (documented) materials for the review.* Usually, the amount of time required for reviewing documentation depends on the availability of the organized materials. Therefore, preparing the file box containing these materials prior to the review day is very important. It will significantly

minimize the time consumed for this activity. The documents and files needed for the review must include but are not limited to the following:

a. Records of children and family
b. Assessment of children
c. Parents' handbook
d. Personnel policy or employee handbook
e. Excerpts of board action relevant to the overall operation of the program
f. Agendas and minutes from staff meetings, parent meetings, and in-service training activities
g. Communication materials for the community (agency calendar, bulletin board, brochures, newsletters, announcements, letters, fliers, memos, and other handouts)
h. Curriculum materials
i. Lesson plans or activity plans for the developmental program
j. Other appropriate records

Other materials, apart from those contained in the file box, may be kept in the classroom or home for teachers and providers to use, such as lesson plans, children's assessments, and portfolios of children's work.

3. *Collect information (through interview, observation, documentation).* Self-study group is trained to use a variety of strategies effectively to examine program quality, including:

   a. *Observing indoor and outdoor activities.* A minimum of two observation periods of at least 30 minutes each are required during the review day. The two reviewers should observe each classroom or home separately. This arrangement will avoid intrusion, especially in the home or small classrooms.
   b. *Interviewing site personnel, children, parents, and any other appropriate persons.* Although the interview may be formal or informal, a formal interview should be conducted, with careful planning as to when and where the interview will take place. To do so will minimize disruption of the daily schedule of program activities. Interviews may be conducted collectively or individually but should last

The self-study is the agency's opportunity to review objectively all aspects of its program in comparison with the exemplary program standards.

no more than 15 minutes each and no more than an hour and a half in all.

c. *Reviewing documentation.* All documents are made available at a centralized location set aside during the review. Adequate working space equipped with tables and chairs is recommended. Pertinent records such as children's assessments and lesson plans are available for review during the observation period. Review of documents usually takes place between observation and interview.

Of the three strategies, observation is the most accurate method of verifying information. A review of the documentation or interviewing people helps to verify, expand, clarify, and summarize the review activities.

4. *Conduct the review, using the exemplary program standards.* There are five components in the exemplary program standards: Environment, Children's Program, Site Personnel, Parent/Site Personnel Partnership, and Administration. Each group may select one or more of the five components to review at one time. All three strategies (observation, interview, and review of documentation) should be used to collect information. After a selected component has been fully reviewed, the group then goes on to the next component, after which the process begins again. All five components should be reviewed fully during the year for each site.

5. *Compare collected information with the exemplary program standards.* The characteristics described in the standards within each component represent the high quality that the program is expected to offer to the children, their parents, and the community. After all necessary information has been collected through the use of the strategies mentioned previously, the reviewers discuss their findings to develop a common perspective about the program. The group compares its findings with the characteristics of an exemplary program for each component, identifies where the program matches or fails to match the description (a gap), and determines what needs improvement.

6. *Identify, discuss, and analyze matches and gaps.* In this comparative process,

program areas that reflect the characteristics described in the standards are identified as program strengths (matches). And program areas that do not match are identified as needing improvement (gaps). (See the Appendix for a blank copy of the "Agency Self-Study Work Sheet," which may be used if desired.) The self-study group summarizes the findings, analyzes them, and discusses which of the matches and gaps best represent the program.

7. *Write self-study summary of findings.* Once all information has been reviewed, analyzed, and discussed, a summary of the self-study is written by the review team(s). *Note:* A form titled "Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings" is included at the end of each component for use as a guide. (See the Appendix for a blank copy of form CD-3013, "Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings," which may be used if desired.) Specific areas of matches must be acknowledged as well as identified gaps. This process will allow site personnel, parents, and board members to view the program as to quality need for improvement. The "Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings" is used by the administration to record specific improvement activities planned, including the anticipated and actual results of those activities. The anticipated results are what should happen after the activities have been implemented.

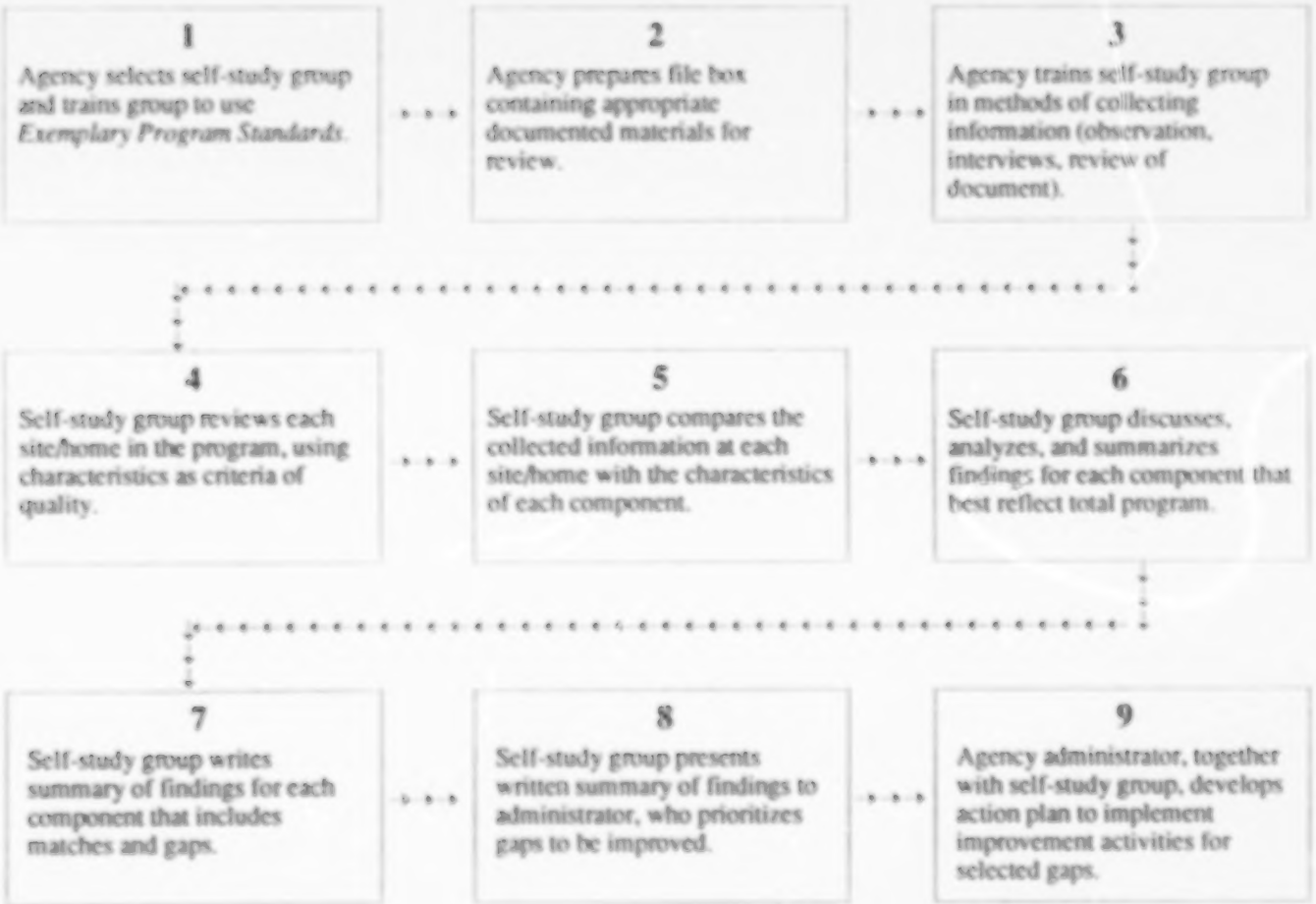
8. *Develop action plans to improve gaps.* The self-study group presents and discusses the summary of findings with the agency's administration. Any gaps are prioritized, and the gaps to be addressed in the action plan are determined. Even in the best of programs, at least one gap per component is likely. At least two gaps must be addressed, and one gap must be addressed in the children's program component. The agency staff responsible for identifying gaps may review the portion of the standards titled "Examples of What to Do" to help them decide how to close the gap.

9. *Implement improvement activities.* This is the final step in the self-study process. By this time several activities have been completed, including identification of prioritized gaps and planning of improvement activities. To implement the improvement plan, the administration

designates persons to carry out the plan and schedule tentative dates for completion. The resulting improvement plan is used by the administration to guide and monitor the full implementation of planned improvement activities. When formal validation of the agency' self-study is conducted by peer reviewers or consortium reviewers, the most recent self-study summary is used. The steps for the self-study are detailed in Chart 2, "Agency Self-Study Process."

The best time of the year to conduct the self-study is near the beginning of the program year (summer or fall). By participating in the self-study, site personnel will have an opportunity to plan activities that they decide need to be carried out for the year. By following these generic steps for the program self-study and improvement planning, each agency can be assured of moving toward an exemplary program. **Notification that a self-study has been completed and/or updated should be mailed to the Child Development Division no later than March 1 of each year.** The form to be used is Form CD-2228B, "Program Self-Study Report" (see the Appendix).

Chart 2
Agency Self-Study Process


1
Agency selects self-study group and trains group to use *Exemplary Program Standards*.
2
Agency prepares file box containing appropriate documented materials for review.
3
Agency trains self-study group in methods of collecting information (observation, interviews, review of document).
4
Self-study group reviews each site/home in the program, using characteristics as criteria of quality.
5
Self-study group compares the collected information at each site/home with the characteristics of each component.
6
Self-study group discusses, analyzes, and summarizes findings for each component that best reflect total program.
7
Self-study group writes summary of findings for each component that includes matches and gaps.
8
Self-study group presents written summary of findings to administrator, who prioritizes gaps to be improved.
9
Agency administrator, together with self-study group, develops action plan to implement improvement activities for selected gaps.

B. Program Quality Validation Review Process

The validation review process verifies the program's self-study and provides information to the program staff for self-improvement.

The validation review process, which is expected to occur within a three-year cycle, allows professional judgment to be made about the program's quality. The primary goal of the process is to validate the self-study summary of findings prepared by the agency. Another goal is to provide the agency with information gathered by the validation review team to help the program plan and implement improvement activities.

Validation reviews are conducted by peer reviewers or consortium reviewers. Programs will generally be notified in the fall of the year if a validation review is to be scheduled during the year. The reviewers will use the program's most recent self-study when the review is conducted.

To conduct the review, the validation review team collects information by (1) observing children's activities and their interaction with the environment and the program; (2) interviewing site personnel, children, parents, and board members whenever possible; and (3) reviewing documentation. Then the information collected is compared with the self-study summary of findings completed by the agency self-study group and with the standards. After comparing and discussing the results of the validation review with agency staff, the administration selects and prioritizes gaps that must be improved. Finally, the agency representatives and the review team collaboratively on the action plan to close the gaps.

The three stages of the validation review process are preparing for the review, conducting the review, and reporting the findings. Each stage has several steps, detailed in charts 3, 4, and 5 to describe the roles of the reviewer and the agency in the review process.

I. Preparing

1. Child Development Division selects peer reviewers and sanctions consortium reviewers.
2. Division selects programs (agencies) to be reviewed at the beginning of the fiscal year.
3. Division mentor consultants train reviewers.
4. (Lead) reviewer schedules reviews with the agency and asks the agency to send copies of the agency's self study to each reviewer.
5. (Lead) reviewer confirms the schedule of reviews and explains by phone the procedures used in the review (observation, interview, documentation) to the agency's personnel.
6. Reviewers meet and discuss the agency's self study.
7. (Lead) reviewer contacts the agency about any last minute arrangement.

II. Reviewing

1. Reviewers meet with agency at the opening conference to review briefly and finalize the day's schedule of activities and tour the facility.
2. Reviewers observe classroom and playground activities.
3. Reviewers conduct interviews (formal and informal) with appropriate persons.
4. Reviewers review documentation, including that agency's self-study, lesson plans of activities, assessment records of children, and any other pertinent written information necessary for the review.
5. Reviewers discuss and analyze all information gathered through observation, interviews, and documentation and compare collected information with the exemplary program standards and the agency's self-study.
6. Reviewers meet informally with agency's site personnel during the day, when needed, to receive additional information or clarification.
7. Reviewers identify findings of program strengths (matches) and areas needing improvement (gaps).

III. Reporting

1. Reviewers use the validation review team work sheet form to write brief statements about matches, gaps, and suggestions to close gaps.
2. Reviewers use the validation review report of findings form to summarize briefly the major findings for each component's matches and gaps.
3. Reviewers present this report of findings to agency staff at the collaboration conference.
4. Agency staff select and prioritize a minimum of two gaps to improve.
5. Reviewers and agency staff agree that an action plan will be developed by the agency to close the gaps.
6. Reviewers leave a copy of the validation review team work sheet and report of findings and agreement with the agency. The original copy of the validation review report of findings and agreement will be sent to the Child Development Division as verification that a formal review was conducted.
7. Agency staff develop the action plan to close the selected gaps. They use Form CD-2005, "Agency Action Plan," to complete the information (see Appendix). The agency uses this form at the next validation review and the agency self-study.

Chart 3
Program Quality
Validation Review Process

Chart 4
Reviewer's Role in the Validation Review Process

1. Preparing for the review	2. Conducting the review	3. Reporting the findings
• Confirm review date and discuss review day's schedule of activities with agency. • Ask agency to send a copy of agency self-study summary of findings. • Review agency's self-study summary of findings. • Finalize preparation with team member.	At opening conference, confirm the day's schedule of activities, including observing, interviewing, reviewing documentation, discussing findings, clarifying information, and reporting findings. • Review programs. Collect information. • Analyze findings with team reviewer. • Compare findings with exemplary program standards and agency's self-study summary of findings. • Clarify information (with and from agency) if needed. • Identify matches and gaps.	• Write report of findings. • Present findings to agency representative(s) at collaboration conference. • Discuss findings with agency. • Agree with agency on intention to complete action plans to close gaps at collaboration conference. • Leave with the agency a copy of the report of findings and agreement.

1. Preparing for the review	2. Conducting the review	3. Reporting the findings
• Attend training offered by Child Development Division and train self-study review group. • Complete self-study. • Confirm review date and discuss program's daily schedule of activities with review team. • Send agency self-study summary of findings to review team. • Organize appropriate documentation for the review file box.	• At opening conference, update daily schedule of activities if there have been changes. • Set up working area for reviewers. • Confirm schedule for interviewing and the number of people to be interviewed. • Designate responsible person or persons to be available at site during the day. • Clarify information requested by review team.	• Invite people for the collaboration conference. • Compare review team's findings with the self-study and exemplary program standards. • Prioritize gaps that need improvement. • Discuss with review team intent to develop and complete the action plan to close gaps.

Chart 5
Agency's Role in the Validation Review Process

Appendix

Exemplary Program Standards

Agency Self-Study Work Sheet

(Use a separate work sheet for each component.)

(Use this work sheet to write down the most significant matches and gaps found in each characteristic.)

Agency name		Program director	Site supervisor
Site	Age range	Self study contact person(s)	Self study date

The following is the result of the self study comparing this site to the characteristics of an exemplary _____ component.

Characteristic: _____

Match(es):

Gap(s):

Characteristic: _____

Match(es):

Gap(s):

Use additional pages if needed.

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
Form CD-3013 (10-91)

Exemplary Program Standards

Sample Agency Self-Study Summary of Findings

(Use a separate sheet for each component.)

Agency name		Program director	
Site	Site supervisor	Age range	Date

FINDINGS

ACTION PLANS

Improvement activities to close the gap	*Who is responsible?*	*Starting date*	*Anticipated results when gap is closed*	*Actual results of improvement activities*	*Self-review date*

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
CD-2228B (10-91)

Note: Please submit the original copy of this form to the California Department of Education no later than March 1.

Exemplary Program Standards
Program Self-Study Report

Submit to: California Department of Education
560 J Street, Suite 220
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project number

Agency name	Number of center-based sites reviewed	Number of family child care homes reviewed
Name of self-study contact person		Telephone number ( )

A. *Self-study process:* Please use this space to describe how the self-study was conducted and who participated in the process (whether you used the accreditation system administered by the NAEYC *or* the program quality review system administered by CDD).

B. *Action plan:* If you used the accreditation system, please disregard this part B.
If you used the program quality review system, please describe your progress in meeting you action plan. Please identify the component and the gap(s) you are addressing.

Component(s): _____

_____

Gap(s)	Progress

Statement of Completion

Completion date

I certify that a program quality self study has been completed by this agency on the date specified above and that the appropriate (CDD development program quality review instrument or NAEYC accreditation was used.	Signature of Executive Director	Date

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
CD 2003 (10/91)

Exemplary Program Standards
Validation Review Team Work Sheet

(This work sheet is used to summarize findings. It includes a general statement about matches in a component and gaps in each characteristic.)

Agency name	Project number	Date of review

Component: A. Environment

Match(es):

Characteristic: Physical Environment

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Children's Schedule

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Interpersonal Environment

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Validation Review Team Work Sheet (Continued)

Component: B. Children's Program
Match(es):

Characteristic: Child-centered Curriculum

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Balanced Curriculum

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Integrated Curriculum

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Validation Review Team Work Sheet (Continued)

Characteristic: Assessment

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Component: C. Site Personnel
Match(es):

Characteristic: Attitudes and Skills

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Professionalism

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Validation Review Team Work Sheet (Continued)

Characteristic: Professional Development

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Component: D. Parent/Site Personnel Partnership
Match(es):

Characteristic: Building a Partnership

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Establishing Parent/Site Personnel Communication

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Validation Review Team Work Sheet (Continued)

Characteristic: Establishing Community Liaison

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Component: E. Administration
Matches):

Characteristic: Administrative Leadership and Support

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Accountability

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Validation Review Team Work Sheet (Concluded)

Characteristic: Administrative Advocacy

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

Characteristic: Planning and Evaluation

Gap(s)	Suggestions for gap(s):

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
CD-2004 (10/91)

1 copy to CDD (FS)
1 copy to CDD (PD & I)
1 copy to Agency
1 copy to Lead Reviewer

Exemplary Program Standards

Validation Review Report of Findings and Agreement

(This is a validation review verification and an agency agreement to develop action plans for selected gaps.)

Agency name	Project number	Date of review
Name of lead reviewer	Signature	
Name of second reviewer	Signature	
Name of agency representative	Signature	

Directions: Validation review team summarizes the major findings, which include identified areas of program strengths (matches) and areas that need improvement (gaps). Suggestions for program improvement on these gaps are also included. Present this report to agency representatives at the collaboration conference. Agency representatives will then select at least two gaps (one of which must be in children's program component) and agree to develop action plan to close these gaps. Indicate which gap to improve by marking (√) next to it in the left column.

Gap to improve	Summary of Findings
	Component: Match(s): Gap(s): Suggestions for improvement Gap(s): Suggestions for improvement

Use additional pages if needed.

California Department of Education
Child Development Division
CD-2005 (10-91)

Exemplary Program Standards
Agency Action Plan

(To be completed after the validation review)

Agency name	Project number	Date
Name of program director	Name of site supervisor	

Directions: Work on a minimum of two gaps (selected and agreed upon at the validation review) and complete the action plan. This plan includes the improvement activities to close the gap, the person responsible, the time line for implementation, and the anticipated and actual results after the action plan has been implemented. This form is kept at the agency, may be used at the next agency self-study review and the validation review, and is sent to the Child Development Division on request.

Component(s): _____

_____

Gap(s)	Action Plan

Use additional pages if needed.

Glossary

Active learning. Learning by doing. The whole body is used to explore and manipulate objects and materials and interact with children and adults.

Administration. A group of individuals, including the program director, executive director, or other administrative staff, who have management or support responsibilities for a child development program.

Administrator. An individual, commonly referred to as a program director, who provides overall direction and guidance in a child development program, who has had extensive experience and training in early childhood education, and who possesses administrative skills.

Assessment. A process used to evaluate a child's development. It should include a variety of techniques, such as observation, interviews, and a portfolio of the child's work.

Board of directors. An organized body of people who control or govern the affairs of an institution or corporation.

Center-based preschool program. A child care and development program offered to a group of children not located in a family child care home.

Child development consortium. A group of CDE-funded child care and development agencies that have formed a network to conduct program quality reviews and other activities.

Child development program. A program that offers developmentally appropriate activities to children in family child care home or centers.

Component. One of the five parts of the exemplary program standards: environment, children's program, site personnel, parent/site personnel partnership, and administration.

Consortium reviewer. A person who is a member of a consortium and is trained to serve on a team that conducts a program quality validation review at a consortium member's child development program.

Cooperative learning. Learning occurring in small groups of children who interact with each other and the materials provided.

Curriculum. A program plan that organizes goals, teaching strategies, content, environment, and equipment.

Developmentally appropriate activity. An activity consistent with what can be expected of how children learn and behave at given stages of development.

Developmental stages. Certain general levels based on a child's age and maturity through which all children pass. These general levels are related to children's cognitive, physical, social, emotional, creative, and linguistic development.

Evaluation. An organized process to determine the effectiveness of the program.

Exemplary program standards. The standards of quality based on current child development theory and research.

Exemplary program standards reviewer. A person (peer reviewer, consortium reviewer, or California Department of Education consultant) who conducts program quality reviews.

Family child care home. A child development program offered to a small group of children in a home setting.

Family child care home agency. An agency that receives from the California Department of Education funding to provide training and guidance to individual home providers.

Family child care provider. A person who provides child development activities along with care and supervision in the provider's home.

Gap. The area found to need improvement when the program a child is receiving is compared with the characteristics of the exemplary program standards.

Match. The area found to be satisfactory when the program the child is receiving is compared with the characteristics of the exemplary program standards.

Nonsubsidized care. Child care not funded by the California Department of Education.

Peer reviewer. A person authorized by the California Department of Education to serve on a team that conducts a program quality validation review of a child development program.

Play. An enjoyable, flexible, spontaneous process involving active engagement and symbolic behavior.

Portfolio. A collection of information contained in a file that presents a profile of each child's development. Such information may include samples of the child's work, anecdotal records, checklists, photographs, and information provided by the child's parents.

Preschool-age program. A half-day or full-day child development program for children approximately two and one-half to five years of age.

Program director. A person who supervises, controls, or manages a child development program.

Program quality review. A process used to determine the quality of a child development program.

Program quality validation review. An on-site review by the California Department of Education that validates the agency's self-study findings to determine the quality of the program.

Report of findings. A written summary of findings based on the results of the program quality validation review.

School-age program. A child development program offered before and after school and during school vacations to children who are enrolled in school.

Self-study. An activity conducted by the self-study group in a program that provides an in-depth comparison of the child development program with the exemplary program standards for the purpose of program improvement.

Self-study group. A group of persons that may include parents, community members, site personnel, administrators, and board members who review programs by comparing them with the exemplary program standards.

Site personnel. Adults who work directly with children in centers and family child care homes. Included are resource specialists, certificated teachers, instructional aides, recreational staff, teachers in training, licensed family child care home providers, and caregivers at a licensed child development site. Volunteers are not included.

Site supervisor. A person in charge of directing a program and supervising the personnel at a single child development site.

Subsidized care. Child care funded in part or in full by the California Department of Education.

Validation reviewer. A member of a program quality validation review team who may be a peer reviewer, consortium reviewer, or consultant in the California Department of Education.

Validation team. A team of two people authorized by the California Department of Education to conduct a program quality validation review.

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